

Capital Campus

FEBRUARY 2012

Getting to Know Dennis Devery

New Acting Vice President Shares His Vision for the Division of Planning and Research

Dennis W. Devery was recently named acting vice president of the Division of Planning and Research at Thomas Edison State College. He is responsible for guiding the strategic planning process as well as institutional data, research and quality assurance at the College.

Prior to joining the College, Devery served as commander of the New Jersey Army National Guard's Joint Training and Training Development Center at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, where he led a team of training experts who provide strategic, operational and tactical instruction to U.S. military forces, state and federal law enforcement professionals and various allied military forces.

Devery, who rose to the rank of colonel in a military career that spanned 30 years, previously served as deputy director and chief of staff of the Afghan National Security Forces Development Assistance Bureau for NATO's

signments, which included New Jersey Army National Guard chief of staff, recruiting commander, state public affairs officer, aviation facility commander, supervisory instructor pilot, cavalry squadron executive officer, aviation company commander and infantry company commander.

"Dennis has led a distinguished military career serving our country and advising top military leaders," said **Dr. George A. Pruitt**, president of Thomas Edison State College. "He brings a unique blend of leadership and operational skills to the College and we are honored to have him on our staff."

Devery, who earned a Master of Science in Management degree from the College in 2005, detailed his vision for the Division of Planning and Research.

"I am very pleased to return to this exceptional institution and to reintegrate with the

"I look forward to developing the Division into a premier institutional research and planning organization..."

Dennis Devery, Acting Vice President, Division of Planning and Research

International Security Assistance Force in Kabul, Afghanistan, where he was responsible for the development and implementation of strategies to staff, equip and train the Afghan National Security Forces. He has held numerous other command and leadership as-

Thomas Edison State College family," said Devery. "I look forward to developing the Division into a premier institutional research and planning organization that will meet the needs of the College community and provide vision for the new Strategic Plan."



Dennis W. Devery

Devery also holds a BS in Management degree from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the U.S. Army War College. He serves as a part-time lecturer for Rutgers and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in educational leadership from Rowan University. He has presented internationally on the subject of organizational leadership and serves as a member of the Board of Governors for the YMCA of Burlington and Camden counties.

In his spare time, Devery runs, cycles, fishes, kayaks and works out, but his favorite pastime is snow skiing. "My family and I have skied all over the world including the Alps in Germany, the Rocky Mountains out west, and the hills of Vermont and Pennsylvania." Devery is also a helicopter and airplane pilot, but admitted that he doesn't have much time to fly anymore, adding, "perhaps I will start doing that again when I retire."

Focus On: Valerie Preston

The U.S. Army slogan, *Be All You Can Be*, is one that **Valerie Preston** has taken to heart.

After working in the Office of Military and Veteran Education for three years, Preston is ready to make her mark in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing.

"My responsibilities as assistant to the dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing are somewhat similar to what I was responsible for while working in Military and Veteran Education," she said. "My knowledge of the College along with the skills I had cultivated made the transition very easy."

In addition to handling all administrative matters for the dean, Preston is responsible for coordinating all quarterly nursing committee meetings, coordinating activities with other nursing staff and assisting the staff in special projects.

"We feel very lucky to have Valerie join us," said **Dr. Susan O'Brien**, dean, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. "Her knowledge about the College and its processes have been an asset to nursing."

Preston's military-like precision for handling her duties resulted from years of working with a state agency and her father's influence.

"I started my career working in the administrative field more than 27 years ago," she

recounted. "I spent most of my career working at the N.J. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, a state agency that supports the N.J. Army and Air National Guard. I also grew up in the shadow of this agency since my father was in the Army National Guard and also worked for the agency for more than 35 years."

During her tenure with the agency, she served on numerous committees, including several in support of the N.J. National Guard to include bringing the USS Battleship New Jersey back to New Jersey.

Preston, who started as a clerk typist and worked her way up to executive assistant, worked for various commissioners under numerous administrations until she took a leave to raise her children.

When it was time to re-enter the workforce, Preston noted that her vast knowledge of the military and the event-planning experience she gained while working briefly for the Myelodysplastic Syndromes Foundation, gave her the qualifications necessary to secure the program assistant position in Military and Veteran Education; now she is ready for this new challenge.

"I enjoy the friendliness and compassion that the employees have, not only toward one another but toward our students," said Preston. "I really enjoy coming to work every day and interacting with such a well-educated, dedicated group of professionals."



Valerie Preston, Assistant to the Dean, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing

Preston holds an AAS degree in secretarial science from Mercer County Community College and has taken several business courses at Rider University toward a bachelor's degree.

"My college education was always earned on a part-time basis while working full time," she noted. "I was very fortunate that I was able to re-enter the workforce with my qualifications and years of experience to make up for not having a bachelor's degree. So, since I'm always stressing to my children how important it is to have a degree, I figure it's time to start backing up what I've been preaching! In the very near future, I will become a student at Thomas Edison State College to finish what was started many years ago."

Preston resides in Hamilton, N.J., with her 14-year-old daughter, Kelsey, and her 10-year-old son, Matthew.

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Sending a Message

measure how well it is communicating with its key audiences.

With more than one million unique visitors annually, the College website (tesc.edu) is an integral piece of outreach. Based on student feedback, the office launched a refreshed website earlier this month. Social media is another avenue for reaching the College's audiences.

"Our social media efforts provide forums that enable students, alumni and prospective students to connect with the College and each other in the spaces where they want to engage," said Guzzardo.

In addition to its current sites on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, Guzzardo said the College has plans to start a blog and develop its newly created site on Google+.

Videos are another method the office uses to tell the College's story. The office recently revised the *Admissions Video Guide*, which is hosted by 2006 graduate Kristina Romero, an Emmy-nominated actress. Upcoming video projects include a student orientation, specific school-based efforts and ongoing collection of alumni testimonials captured at the College's Commencement ceremony.

Print publications continue to be another method to promote the College and stay engaged with its key audiences. In FY 2011, the College printed more than 1.3 million pieces.

Print materials typically complement targeted outreach efforts, which enable the College to present its programs to specific audiences and have been integral to successfully launching programs for educational leadership, clinical trials management, homeland security, fitness and wellness, and organizational leadership.

Special events are also tactics used to reach distinct targets. The office identifies opportunities such as conferences and information sessions and oversees the logistics. In addition to student recruitment efforts, the office has played a critical role to increase revenue and attendance of the National Institute for the Assessment of Adult Learning.

Media relations is still a core function for the office, which had a number of notable placements this year including articles in *The New York Times*, *Military Advanced Education*, *Nursing Spectrum*, *Trenton Times* and the *The Press of Atlantic City*.

Staff Activities

Jamie Priester, assistant registrar and director of Mentor and Grade Administration, was recently re-elected as councilwoman to Dublin Borough Council for a four-year term. This is Priester's second term as councilwoman.

Robin Walton, director of Community and Government Affairs, has been appointed to the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership and to the Trenton Health Team Community Advisory Council.

Dr. Henry van Zyl, vice provost, Center for Directed Independent Adult Learning (DIAL), visited the University of South Africa (UNISA) in November to seek further opportunities for extending collaboration between the UNISA and the College. During that visit, van Zyl presented a workshop on Thomas Edison State College's innovative, collaborative course development model. He had several meetings with key staff members of UNISA and, as a result of his workshop presentation, was invited to participate as the main speaker in a seminar on plagiarism. The seminar, "The plague of plagiarism: academic fetish or ethical casualty," was well attended by UNISA staff and elicited vigorous discussion. Van Zyl was joined by Prof. Gabriel Kabanda, pro-vice chancellor of Zimbabwe Open University.

John P. Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs, formally assumed a two-year term as vice chairman of the Princeton Regional Chamber of Commerce at the organization's "Changing of the Guard" event on Jan. 17. The event, which was attended by more than 200 guests, included a presentation by Pat Ryan, the newly installed chairman of the Princeton Regional Chamber.

Dr. Mary Ellen Caro, vice president, Enrollment Management and Learner Services; **Tom Devine**, associate dean, School of Applied Science and Technology; **Diane Koye**, director of Budget and Analysis; **Louis Martini**, director of Military and Veteran Education; **Kelli Parlante-Givas**, associate director, Office of Military and Veteran Education; **Marie Power-Barnes**, associate vice president, Office of Marketing; **Gerald Walsh**, associate director, Office of Military and Veteran Education; and Military Base Managers **Ellen Coleman**, **Alison Hansen** and **Patti Hunt** attended the Council of College and Military Educators (CCME) Annual Symposium "Salute to Possibilities: Paving the Way for our Military Community" in Orlando, Fla., Feb. 13-16. Martini, who served as CCME president in 2008, currently serves as symposium event manager, historian and NAIMES (National Association of Institutions for Military Education Services) liaison.

Todd Siben, assistant director, Collegiate Credit Assessment Center, was invited to speak to a "Social Problems" class at Mercer County Community College in West Windsor, N.J. The subject matter of the class on Jan. 30 was "accreditation in higher education" as a sociological issue, and Siben discussed the history, necessity, process and current issues in accreditation.



Robin Walton



Dr. Henry van Zyl



John P. Thurber



Louis Martini



Dr. Mary Ellen Caro



Marie Power-Barnes



Todd Siben

Sending a Message

How the Office of Communications spreads the word about the College

When most people think about public relations they typically think press releases and newspaper or TV coverage. But in today's cyber-intensive world, the staff of the Office of Communications is using the Internet, including the College website and social media, videos, publications and targeted outreach as well as traditional media outreach to highlight the College and its programs.

"It's never been harder to attract traditional coverage, so we have to come up with different ways to tell our story," said **Joe Guzzardo**, communications director. "To do that, we are using a variety of methods to reach our key audiences." At the January Lunch and Learn, hosted by the Office of Communications, Guzzardo

highlighted the functions of the office and introduced its staff, including **Karen Hume**, director of Creative Services; **Jeff Lushbaugh**, director of Website and Multimedia Production; **Chris Miller**, art director; **Kelly Saccomanno**, communications and media outreach specialist; and **Linda Soltis**, communications and media outreach specialist.



Joe Guzzardo, Communications Director

The presentation focused on the diverse nature of how the office disseminates information and tells the College's story.

To better serve the College's many audiences, which include prospective and current students, alumni, supporters and staff, the Office of Communications conducts Web usability studies and surveys to

Welcome New Staff



Donald Linky has been appointed community affairs liaison in the Office of Community and Government Affairs. Linky is located on the 3rd floor of the Kelsey Building and may be reached at extension 2072.



Taniesha James has been appointed clerk typist in the Office of Test Administration. James is located on the 3rd floor of the Canal Banks Building and may be reached at extension 2250.

Women in Higher Education

Thomas Edison State College has formed a local chapter of the American Council on Education (ACE-Net) for the Office of Women in Higher Education (OWHE). The mission of this local chapter, the Women's Professional Network of Thomas Edison State College, is to create an educational, social, professional and political climate in which women's values, in all their diversity and richness, are heard and included in efforts to shape the institutional and public agenda of higher education.

This local chapter will hold several lunches with keynote speakers throughout the year with the focus being on female employees interested in career development and enrichment. The first lunch, Empowering Women to Succeed, will feature Dr. Barbara Gitenstein, president, The College of New Jersey, and **Dr. Mary Ellen Caro**, vice president of Enrollment Management and Learner Services, Thomas Edison State College. Opening remarks will be made by **Dr. George A. Pruitt**, president of Thomas Edison State College. The event will be held on March 6 from 11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.; boxed lunches will be available for those in attendance. If you are interested in attending please RSVP no later than Feb. 29 to **Kristin Gonzalez** at kgonzalez@tesc.edu. Please note that seats are limited and reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

The committee for this chapter is composed of employees at Thomas Edison State College and the New Jersey State Library including: **Robin Walton**, NJ ACE-Net institution representative, **Mindi Shalita**, NJ ACE-Net State Board Member, **Susan Davenport**, **Sylvia Hamilton**, **Karen Hume**, **Jaclyn Joworisak**, **Andrea Levandowski**, **Sheri Shafer**, **Carol Smith**, **Linda Vasbinder** and **Gonzalez**. Chapter updates will be provided through a quarterly electronic e-newsletter. If you have any questions, please contact Walton at rwalton@tesc.edu or at extension 2085.

Capital Campus is produced by the Office of Communications at Thomas Edison State College. To submit a story idea for the newsletter or for more information, please contact Linda Soltis at extension 2065.



College and Library staff prepared baskets for holiday charity drive.

Holiday Spirit!

In keeping with the holiday spirit, AFT Local 4277 spearheaded a College- and Library-wide drive to collect items for The Children's Home Society of New Jersey. Through the generosity of staff, 37 baskets of toiletries, comfort clothing and cleaning supplies were donated to grandparents who are the primary caregivers of children from the charity. AFT Holiday Project Committee: **Peggy Allen**, **Rhonda Beckett**, **Laura Brenner-Scotti**, **Christine Carter**, **Kathleen Griffis**, **Iris Lewin**, **Kristin Lobasso**, Chair **Mary Lynch**, **Charlene Martucci**, **Andrea Mirsky**, **Jocelyn Tucker** and **Li-yun Young** from the College and **Ruth Pallenta** from the Library.

Congratulations

Thomas Edison State College was awarded the "Distance Education Innovation Award" by the National University Technology Network at its 29th Annual Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, for its FlashTrack® program. **Dr. Henry van Zyl**, vice provost, Center for Directed Independent Adult Learning (DIAL), who was one of tri-chairs for the conference, received the award on behalf of the College and DIAL team.



Ana Berdecia, senior fellow/director, Center for the Positive Development of Urban Children, The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy, had her blood pressure checked at the Thomas Edison State College/New Jersey State Library Health Fair held in Prudence Hall in January. More than 60 staff visited vendors such as Robert Wood Johnson Hamilton Center for Health and Wellness, Hamilton W. Windsor Acupuncture, Blood Council of N.J., American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, Autism Speaks and American Red Cross.